

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 8635

LIMDIS

FROM US REP MBFR:

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: BELGIAN OPENING STATEMENT

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: AD HOC GROUP GAVE PROVISIONAL
APPROVAL TO DRAFT OF BELGIAN OPENING STATEMENT AFTER
MAKING SEVERAL CHANGES. TEXT AFTER CHANGES FOLLOWS: BEGIN TEXT:

(INFORMAL TRANSLATION)

1. THE WORK WHICH OUR GOVERNMENTS HAVE UNDERTAKEN
AND WHICH BRINGS US TOGETHER TODAY IS IMPORTANT. IT
INVOLVES THE REDUCTION OF ENORMOUS MILITARY CAPABILITIES
SUCH AS THE WORLD HAVE NEVER KNOWN IN TIME OF PEACE AND
WHICH ARE MASSED AT THE DIVIDING LINE WHICH DISTINGUISHES
BETWEEN TWO WORLDS WHICH ARE DIFFERENT BUT WHICH ARE
DETERMINED TO LIVE TOGETHER PEACEFULLY.

2. AS FAR AS MY COUNTRY IS CONCERNED, ANY PROGRESS
IN DETENTE IN EUROPE SHOULD GO HAND-IN-HAND WITH A
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LIGHTENING OF THE MILITARY BURDEN. LIKEWISE MY GOVERNMENT

IS VERY PLEASED WITH THE OPENING OF THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS WHICH BEAR ON THE MUTUAL REDUCTION OF FORCES AND ARMAMENTS AS WELL AS ON THE ASSOCIATED MEASURE IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

3. THE OBJECTIVE WHICH WE PURSUE IS BOTH COMPLEX AND DELICATE. WE ARE ADDRESSING OURSELVES, IN REALITY, TO THE ARRANGEMENTS OF DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE WHICH HAVE ASSURED THE SECURITY OF OUR CONTINENT FOR NEARLY THIRTY YEARS. IN THE COURSE OF OUR WORK, WE MUST THEREFORE PROTECT CONSTANTLY THE VITAL PRINCIPLE OF THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY NOT TO DIMINISH SECURITY IN ANY DEGREE. IN ADVANCING THIS REQUIREMENT, WE ARE IN NO WAY LOOKING TO COMPLICATE THE WORKING OUT OF FUTURE AGREEMENTS. TO THE CONTRARY, WHAT WE WISH IS TO ASSURE THE VALUE AND SERIOUSNESS OF THEM. THE PRESENT LEVEL OF FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE APPEARS EXCESSIVE IN RELATION TO THE SITUATION OF CONFIDENCE AND STABILITY TO WHICH WE ASPIRE. WE OUGHT THEREFORE TO SEARCH FOR A SECURITY IDENTICAL TO THAT WHICH WE NOW KNOW, IF NOT STILL BETTER, BUT AT LOWER LEVELS OF FORCE.

4. IN PROCEEDING TOWARD THIS TASK, OUR FIRST PREOCCUPATION WILL BE TO AGREE TO NOTHING WHICH COULD LEAD TO A MILITARY DISADVANTAGE FOR ANYONE AMONG US. SINCE OUR MILITARY FORCE STRUCTURES ARE CHARACTERIZED BY A GREAT DIVERSITY WHICH EMBRACES PARTICULARLY DIFFERENCES IN CONCEPT, DISPARITIES IN FORCES AND EQUIPMENT, GEOGRAPHIC REALITIES, ET., THIS CONCERN FOR A RECIPROCAL SECURITY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PRESENT US WITH SOME DIFFICULT PROBLEMS WHICH WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO RESOLVE.

5. IT IS PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF THIS COMPLEXITY OF PROBLEMS THAT IT WOULD SEEM WISE TO US NOT TO CONSIDER AT THE OUTSET ANY OVERLY AMBITIOUS MODIFICATIONS IN THE FORCES PRESENT IN CENTRAL EUROPE. ANY INORDINATE REDUCTIONS COULD ALLOW DESTABILIZING EFFECTS AND WOULD THUS RUN COUNTER TO THE GOAL WHICH WE SEEK.

6. THIS CONCERN TO CONSOLIDATE OUR SECURITY DESPITE THE DIMINUTION OF FORCES FACING ONE ANOTHER, MAKES US THINK THAT, ALONG WITH AGREED REDUCTIONS IN FORCES

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IN CENTRAL EUROPE, IT WILL BE APPROPRIATE TO ELABORATE SOME STABILIZING MEASURES AS WELL AS APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS OF VERIFICATIONS AND OF NON-CIRCUMVENTION OF OUR EVENTUAL AGREEMENTS.

7. I WISH FINALLY TO ADVANCE TWO REMARKS:
THE FIRST IS THAT IN THE EYES OF MY GOVERNMENT THE INITIAL EFFORT OUGHT TO POINT OUT TO ALL THE RESPONSIBILITY

OF THE GREAT POWERS. THESE POWERS PLAY A PREPONDERANT ROLE
IN THE MAINTENANCE OF STABILITY AS THEY DO IN THE
CONSOLIDATION OF DETENTE, AND IT IS THUS QUITE NATURAL THAT
THE RESPONSIBILITY WOULD FALL TO THE GREAT POWERS TO TAKE THE
FIRST STEPS AND THEREFORE TO SHOW THE WAY.

THE SECOND REMARK DEALS WITH THE TIES WHICH UNITE
MY COUNTRY WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. AS MEMBERS OF A
COMMUNITY WELL ON THE WAY TO REALIZATION, WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE
ACCOUNT OF THE POLITICAL FINALITIES OF THE LATTER WHEN IT COMES
TO JUDGING THE MEASURES WHICH WILL BE PROPOSED TO US.

8. IT IS A WEIGHTY TASK WHICH ATTENDS OUR CONFERENCE.
BUT WE ARE INSPIRED BY THE POLITICAL WILL TO BRING IT ABOUT.
MY GOVERNMENT WISHES FULL SUCCESS TO OUR ENTERPRISE TO WHICH
IT PLANS TO MAKE AN ACTIVE CONTRIBUTION.

9. I WOULD LIKE, IN CLOSING, TO TAKE THIS OCCASION TO
EXPRESS THE GRATITUDE OF MY GOVERNMENT TO THE AUSTRIAN
AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR KIND SUPPORT.END TEXT.HUMES

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